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ABSTRACT

The principal of a newly opened elementary school implemented a practicum study designed to unify faculty, parents, staff, and children; add direction to the program; develop a sense of purpose; and increase participation. It was expected that a vision statement would be developed in the school's first year of operation, and that parents and staff would join in planning experiences to maximize the program's effectiveness. The vision statement focused on a supportive school environment, and offered the guarantee that every participating child would complete the program knowing and believing that he or she was lovable and capable. In an effort to obtain results on teachers, parents, and students, a needs assessment was conducted; the diversity of children and teachers was assessed; and climate surveys were administered. Practicum evaluation data indicated that objectives were, for the most part, accomplished. Daily attendance and honor roll participation were high. Discipline data reflected a low referral rate, and an exceptionally low rate of aggressive behaviors. It is concluded that a strong vision appears to have several positive effects. Ten appendices provide related material, including the vision statement, a 28-item bibliography for teacher in-service, and newspaper articles on the program. Cited are 24 references. (RH)

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Unifying Faculty, Staff, Students, and Community
by Establishing and Implementing a Unique Vision
for a New Elementary School

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Unifying Faculty, Staff, Students, and Community
by Establishing and Implementing a Unique Vision
for a New Elementary School

by,

John R. Currie
Cluster 27

A Practicum II Report Presented to the Ed.D. Program
in Early and Middle Childhood
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

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PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

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Approved:

May 8, 1990
Date of Final Approval of
Report

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ABSTRACT

Unifying Faculty, Staff, Students, and Community by Establishing and Implementing a Unique Vision for a New Elementary School. Currie, John R., 1990: Practicum Report, Nova University, Ed.D. Program in Early and Middle Childhood. Descriptors: Leadership Role/ Vision/ Goal Orientation/ Goal Setting/ Community Involvement/ Elementary School/ Planning.

This practicum addressed the problem of maximizing the unification of participants--faculty, staff, parents and children--in opening a new elementary school. Each of these publics brought with them a variety of histories and expectations.

Vision was utilized as a central rallying point. The principal expressed his vision for the new school and the participants--staff, parents, and children--refined it and assisted in implementing it.

Implementation included shared decision making and goal setting, inservice education, and joint "storytelling" sessions with all of the participants. Goals were arrived at through joint effort between the parents and teachers. Children helped in establishing classroom rules and selecting the mascot for the new school. Teachers met to outline the expectations of the curriculum at the various levels. Measurement was made of the perceptions of the teachers, parents, and children.

Parent and teacher measures met criterion. The children's measures were slightly below criterion, however, the reliability of the instrument is questionable. Attendance data indicates a high average daily rate. Honor roll participation is also high. Discipline data reflects a low referral rate, and an exceptionally low rate of aggressive behaviors.

Overall, this program has been successful in unifying the various publics involved. The methods used added direction to the program, strengthened knowledge of the purpose, minimized dissatisfaction, and increased active participation.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Description of the Community

The public school which was the setting for this practicum serves families from an area in excess of 150 square miles. Within the school's attendance zone, there are three towns with populations under 1000. The remainder of the families reside in predominantly rural locations. There is rapid growth as this area is quickly becoming a "bedroom" community for a large metropolitan area.

The socio-economic breakdown is generally lower middle class. There were relatively few middle-middle to upper class families in the community; however, the growth trend lends itself to an increase in representation of these groups. Parents in most of the families were unskilled and worked in unskilled service and manufacturing or in agriculture. In spite of the economic situation, the population was relatively settled and stable. Few of the residents moved away.

The Writer's Work Setting

The school, which opened in August 1989, was planned to serve children from kindergarten through the fifth grade. Approximately 690 students were in attendance during the

1989-90 school year. These students were drawn from four existing centers.

The instructional allocation for the 1989-90 school year consisted of thirty-six teaching units, a principal, an assistant principal, a primary curriculum specialist and a guidance counselor. The initial faculty was, for the most part, hired from other elementary centers within the county, with few being selected as transfers from elsewhere or hired as first year teachers. In addition, a minimum of twenty-seven support personnel filled positions such as bookkeeper, secretary, classroom aides, custodial and kitchen workers.

Reports from the schools which served the target population during the 1988 -89 school year indicated academic performance for the majority of children was at or below the district average. It was also projected that there would be 60-70 percent participation in the free and reduced lunch program.

The Writer's Role and Responsibilities

The writer is the principal of the school. As such, his responsibilities include coordinating the entire school program, assessing the effectiveness of the curriculum in

meeting community needs, recommendation of curriculum changes, implementation of new programs, community relations, and staff selection, training and evaluation. Before being assigned to this school he served as principal at another center for five years. He has also served on the district-wide Drop-out Prevention Committee, the Steering Committee for Programs for Four-Year Olds, and the Principal Evaluation Committee. He has also been a member of the county-wide Task Force to Study Residential Child Care Programs, and the Board of Directors of the YMCA and is currently on the board of directors of two children's homes.

The writer's academic background consists of a undergraduate degree with a dual major in special education and elementary education, and a Master's degree in special education with a minor in administration and supervision. Post masters work includes statistics, research, and developmental and physiological psychology.

His teaching experiences have spanned the developmental spectrum. He has established programs for the parents of emotionally involved and behavior disordered preschoolers, taught children with specific learning disabilities at the

elementary and middle school levels, and taught undergraduate and graduate classes in colleges and universities. His work with parents has led to addresses at national conventions, pediatric seminars, state-sponsored workshops for professionals involved with families, and to university faculties. The thrust of these lectures centered around methods for helping parents to become more effective in meeting the emotional and developmental needs of their children, and being more responsive to parental concerns. Parent training and counselling is a strong component of the writer's professional background.

Parent-child relationships and children's affective development are areas of intense interest to the writer. He has published an article on the importance of affection in school programs (Currie, 1988). The community recognizes this expertise through pediatric referrals of parents (and children) and occasional expert testimony called for by the courts. The school program demonstrates this through the implementation of the affective component, parental classes, parent and child counselling, and the overall family orientation.

Membership in professional organizations is perceived by the writer as important to personal and professional growth. His professional affiliations include the Society for Research in Child Development, the Association of Childhood Education International, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, and the National Association of Elementary School Principals.

CHAPTER II

Description of the Problem

In initiating a school site, perhaps the most difficult activity to undertake was to unify all involved under a new identity. Children were being reassigned to attend school with a whole new set of classmates. Families who had a long history at one school or another were anticipating a different set of expectations. Staff were leaving old secure positions to join with new work-mates in the insecurity of not knowing their compatibility with new work directions and demands. In short, the diversity of the population serving and being served lent itself to a degree of anxiety, which left unaddressed would have had negative consequences for the program.

The writer had the overall responsibility to get the program off to a positive start. He set the overall tone for the initial climate. He needed to ensure a common direction and trust to the program. He had to minimize the disorientation of the children, staff and parents.

The writer was charged by the superintendent and the Board to develop the new program under the strategy mapped out at his first site--a strategy that involved shared

responsibility for children's development and program growth and direction. This program was unique to the system because of its overriding concern for affection, self-concept development, and dedication to strengthening families as a tool for improved achievement and developmental outcomes (Currie, 1988). The novelty of the approach contributed to the complexity of initiating the population to the program.

A unifying plan was needed to get all involved with the new school headed in the same direction. A plan had to be developed which incorporated the writer's concerns, the staff's experience and input, parental understanding and dedication, and the children's perceived needs. This required staff and community education and supportive and unifying activities.

The problem was that a diverse population of staff, parents, and children with varied histories, philosophies, and methods was being brought together without a common focus.

Documentation of the Problem

Documentation of the problem consisted of five measures. First, a breakdown of the numbers of children coming to the

new school from other centers (Table 1) illustrated the demographic diversity of the children. The count represented children who had attended another center for at

Table 1

Student Transfer Data

Center	Number of Students*
TES	187
RES	72
EES	203
UES	56

*plus projected kindergarten 130

Table 2

Teacher Employment Data

Type of Center	Number Centers	Number Teachers
Elementary Schools	9	24
Middle Schools	2	2
Private Schools	2	2
County Office	1	1
Out-of-County	1	1
Out-of-State	2	2
Universities	3	4
Totals	20	36

least one and as many as six years. Second, the diversity of staff was documented through a summary of the hiring, by center, that had taken place (Table 2).

Measurement of the differences of experience and attitudes was done through instruments designed by the writer. These final three measures were comprised of: 1) a Preliminary Needs Assessment (Appendix A) was administered to the Citizens' Advisory Committee--a group of parents who provide input for the decision making by representing the community at large; 2) a Teacher Diversity Questionnaire (Appendix B) was administered to teachers who were selected to serve on the team; and 3) a Children's Diversity Questionnaire (Appendix C) was administered to a random sample (every tenth name on an alphabetical list) of 47 children who had been reassigned to the new elementary school.

Each of the instruments was designed to address four specific areas--curriculum, child view, discipline, and parent/family involvement. The Preliminary Needs Assessment allowed for feedback concerning the desires of the community for the school program and, to some extent, what they already knew about the schools. The Diversity

Questionnaire was meant to illustrate the diversity of the teaching staff through sampling the amount of attention that was given to each of these areas at their 1988-89 work locations. The Children's Diversity Questionnaire was the measure of the students' perception of their current school situations.

Table 3 provides a summary of the results of the three instruments. For each of the measures consensus was regarded as three quarters of the respondents in agreement on a given item.

Table 3

Questionnaire Items Reaching Consensus

Instrument	Consensus Items	Total Items
CAC Needs Assessment (n= 15)	6	29
Children's Diversity (n= 47)	4	13
Teacher Diversity Version (n= 15)	17	30

The results illustrate two important considerations. First, the diversity of the individuals completing the forms was indicated by the number of items not reaching the

level of consensus. Second, by using the items which reflect consensus, a needs-perception analysis was made possible through comparing the needs identified by the Citizens' Advisory Committee and the perceptions of the teachers and children reflected on their questionnaires.

The Preliminary Needs Assessment illustrated the diversity of desires for the program, the differences in knowledge of programs at schools the children currently attend, and the desire for active parental participation. Both the Teacher's and Children's Diversity Questionnaires illustrated the differences in the perception of experiences in the areas of curriculum, discipline, child-view and parent/family involvement.

The items of consensus on the Preliminary Needs Assessment are reported in Table 4. The parental desire for "warmth" in the school environment, an interest in becoming active with the school, and the inclusion of family activities were identified as most important. It was notable that these were selected above academics and discipline in their level of importance.

The argument can be made that the Preliminary Needs Assessment of the Citizens' Advisory Committee was

Table 4

CAC Questionnaire Consensus Items

1. Most important to school program--warm and caring.
2. Most important child concern--positive self-image.
12. Would like family centered activities.
13. Do not feel most school are alike.
14. Would be willing to become involved in school.
15. Excited about having children attend the new school.

representative only of parents who were already active and, as such, was not a random sample of the public itself. One must remember, however, that it was the opinion and thought of these active participants that would shape the direction of the program. Membership on the Committee had been solicited publically and was open to anyone living in the community the school serves. Attendance at the meetings was open and the times and dates of the meetings were publicized in advance.

The children perceived some aspects of the school as more punitive--they were unable to reach a consensus on item 10 of the Children's Diversity Scale. It asked whether they felt the faculty had any affective ties to them. This was supported by a unanimous agreement that children went

to the principal's office only when they had done something wrong (see Table 5). However, they did report that the faculty did tell them how special they were.

Table 5

Children's Diversity Consensus Items

1. Children go to principal's office because they did something wrong.
2. The teachers and the principal do not eat lunch with the students.
5. It is more important to try hard than get good grades.
11. The teachers and the principal do tell us how special we are.

The teachers polled agreed on a high number of items (Table 6). Contrary to the Preliminary Needs Assessment, the teachers perceived academics as being the most stressed goal of their programs. This could possibly be related to the indications that administrators heavily stressed test results. Other items indicated that, at the schools to which they were then assigned, parent needs and family issues were not priorities. Several of teachers' observations suggested that the principal could have done

Table 6

Teacher Diversity Consensus Items

2. Teachers are aware of principal's expectations.
3. Teachers do not eat lunch with their students.
5. Academics is the first and foremost goal of school.
6. Test results are stressed a great deal.
7. No family activity planned at current school.
12. Corporal punishment used at current school.
13. Administrators do not spend time preventing behavior problems.
14. Teachers are encouraged to vary curriculum.
15. There is not a parent library at their school.
16. Library does not subscribe to professional journals.
17. School does not offer parenting programs.
18. Not many events except Parent-Teacher Organization to involve parents.
21. There are not faculty advisory committees at school.
27. Most teacher contact with parents is for help in dealing with a problem.
28. There are not too many fund raisers during the year.
29. Principal does not visit classroom daily.
30. Principal does not know each child by name.

more to establish warmth--visiting classrooms, learning children's names, and spending more time counseling children to prevent behavior problems to name a few.

Looking at the tabulations together, there seemed to be a notable difference in the priorities that the parents identified and those identified by the teachers. Parents looked first for a warm and caring environment that was responsive to the child's need for positive self-concept. Teachers reported that most stress was placed on academic attainment. This difference was supported by some of the children's perceptions about interpersonal relationships with the faculty at their schools. There was agreement between the parents and teachers that parent involvement was limited. Both parents and teachers found parent participation important, but evidently there was little such involvement beyond the functions of the parent-teacher organizations.

The overall results showed that consensus was reached on few of the individual questionnaire items. On the Preliminary Needs Assessment and the Children's Diversity Questionnaire consensus was reached on much fewer than half of the items. On the Teacher Diversity Questionnaire

consensus was a little better than half. These results did point to some diversity in the desires and perceptions of the future population of the new school.

Analysis of Causes

The most evident cause of student, teacher, and parent diversity was the fact that this center was new and drew from many various communities within the county. People who had never rallied together were now being asked to share a new building and more importantly a new concept--the school's unique vision.

The data reflected the diversity of the populations. The causes of this diversity were most likely a result of personal interpretations of what constituted the educational experience. Diversity could also have been attributed to the leadership style of various principals. Different administrators perceive program strategies differently, even though their goals might be identical. Among other things, they differ in the amount of involvement they allow parents and teachers in the planning process and they differ in their overall child-view orientations and developmental understanding.

The Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

The problems the principal of a new school faced were minimizing dissatisfaction and unifying a diverse group. The program's thrust was toward meeting the increased demands placed upon the organization by the society it served. One extensive study (Fuller and Izu, 1986) suggested that school organizations were "at-risk" from both inside and outside influences on organizational cohesion. Thus in addressing mission one had to be cognizant of the influence of both inside and outside forces to better manage the direction of the involvement of each.

Gray and Deal (1982) identified many diverse subgroups within a school community. These groups included parents, faculty, classified employees, administration, students, etc. Each of these groups spoke its own dialect, when describing the school's function in their lives. Gray and Deal's research led them to conclude that diverse groups could not be brought together without an expressed commitment to creating a "functional we"--a situation of shared planning and "speaking the same dialect". During the unifying process success was measured by the ability of

each of the subgroups to share their unique perspectives in a productive manner.

Fuller and Izu (1986) found that the effectiveness of teachers and administrators was related to "faith in schoolwide planning, the match in personal and school philosophy, and the school improvement program's philosophy, respectively (p. 519)". They further suggested that schools involved in serving "lower-income communities" were at greater risk for cohesion difficulties caused by outside bureaucratic interference. However, they also pointed out that an effective internal structure could override many of these negative influences.

Carew, Carew, and Blanchard (1984) reported that during periods of group development four stages occur--orientation, dissatisfaction, resolution and production. Group morale cycles through these stages reaching a low during the dissatisfaction stage. Though productivity continues to increase during this stage, group members question the goals when finding hopes and expectations are not easily met. Kouzes and Posner (1987) suggested the effects of the dissatisfaction stage could be minimized through a more intensive orientation experience.

Today, greater demands are being placed upon the schools for overall child-rearing responsibility. Given that more than fifty percent of the average child's waking time, during a school day, is spent in the educational setting, the school is not only being charged with academic gains but moral education, counselling activity, discipline, and with delivering supportive warmth. In many cases the surrogacy role is overwhelming (Zimiles, 1986). With this thrust toward more child-rearing responsibility comes a greater need for cooperation between home and school (Entwisle and Hayduk, 1981). In fact, Allard (1985) found that in building school identity and student feelings of membership, building family support and bonding was an extremely functional activity. Though the thrust of her work was done with college students, the concept of family involvement should hold even greater import in the elementary school situation. The need of stronger surrogacy roles gives credence to greater community involvement in determining the goals and objectives for local schools. Teachers need to be prepared to accept the responsibilities being placed upon them and by virtue of the responsibility should also be involved in the program

development process (Barth, 1986; Fuller and Izu, 1986).

The literature supported the contention that newly formed groups needed orientation to minimize dissatisfaction. It also supported the need for developing a united approach to the school's mission, the increased complexity of that mission requiring more parental involvement, and the subscription of involved individuals to a clear statement of vision.

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION METHODS

Goals and Expectations

The goal of this practicum was to ensure a sense of identity, unity and goal understanding in the populations serving and being served. In doing so, it was expected that a vision statement would be developed and communicated during the first year of operation for the new school and that parents and staff would join together in planning experiences to maximize the program's effectiveness.

Objectives and Measurement Methods

In order to achieve the goal of this practicum, the following objectives and measurement methods were identified. Prior to the end of the 1989-90 school year:

1) the teachers will participate in the formulation of the purpose statements for their particular level as evidenced by a completed set of minutes of their meetings presented on the designated form (Appendix D).

2) 8 of 10 teachers will identify a minimum of three of the school's annual goals as requested on the Climate Scale for Teachers (Appendix E).

3) teachers will respond to the Climate Scale for

Teachers with a collective approval rating score of 80% or greater.

4) 8 of 10 students, in a random sample, will identify the school mascot and motto on Climate Scale for Kids (Appendix F).

5) a random sample of students will indicate an 80% or better approval rating score on the Climate Scale for Kids.

6) students will demonstrate an acceptable level of self-discipline as evidenced by office discipline referrals accounting for less than 15% of the student population.

7) 8 of 10 parents in a random sample will be able to identify three of the school's unique goals as evidenced by responses on the Climate Scale for Parents (Appendix G).

8) a random sample of parents will indicate an 80% or better approval rating on the Climate Scale for Parents.

Assessment Instruments

Teacher and parent attitudes were to be measured through the use of the climate profile found in Appendices E and G respectively. These items were to be designed by the writer. They incorporate items identified by the school district as important elements for use in climate inventories. Some items were drawn from an unpublished

sample inventory prepared by the district office. Results were to be tabulated by comparing the average score on the instrument with 80 percent of the highest possible average score.

A student climate profile was also developed (Appendix F). Many of the items were drawn from district guidelines. It contains questions relating to the school mascot and motto.

The method of measuring teacher understanding of the purpose statements at a given grade level was to be the submission of a copy of the minutes of the interface meetings. The prescribed format for interface meetings and purpose statements is shown in Appendix F.

Other items of data collection were to be developed as a part of the training program. These were to include observation forms and activity reports.

Plans for Analyzing Results

Most of the results were to be analyzed mathematically. The climate profiles were to be analyzed numerically and reported in table format. They were to be reported by item analysis and as subscales identified by the literature as connected to the vision process. Student discipline data

would be reported numerically. All of the data was to be compared to the criterion set forth in the objectives. A narrative discussion of the results was to be included.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Possible Solutions

The concerns being addressed by this practicum include ensuring cohesiveness between parents, teachers, and students; avoidance of job dissatisfaction; shared commitment toward the organizational goals; and maximizing both teacher and student output. It is felt that the responsibility to address these areas of concern is greatest when dealing with a new school situation. However, given these same circumstances, the opportunities to create a productive climate are also expanded.

The literature on effective schools points to the leadership of the principal as the single most influential variable (Wilson and Corcoran, 1987). Richard Andrews (Brandt, 1987) identifies the two most important roles of the effective principal as being a visible presence and setting the vision for the school.

Setting and communicating the vision of the school comes up time and again in the literature as a sign of an effective educational leader. Blum, Butler, and Olsen, (1987) have included vision building as one of five content

strands in their year long leadership workshop. Deal (1987) predicts that the most successful schools of the future will have leaders that shape their communities through visions. Webster (1988) equates a strong leader's "singular sense of personal purpose" as the "mission for the organization". He also states that the strong leader has "a strategy for regularly communicating the organization's mission to others (p. 9)". The results of a clearly communicated vision are: 1) higher levels of job satisfaction; 2) commitment; 3) loyalty; 4) clarity of direction; 5) pride; and 6) productivity among others (Kouzes and Posner, 1988).

Having vision for any organization allows for the growth of unity. It's very uniqueness can provide a rallying point. Kouzes and Posner (1988) state that "We have found in our research that a clear vision is a powerful force. It has a significant influence on followers (p. 92)" and "the most important role of vision is to give 'focus to human energy' (p. 98)".

Buchholz and Roth (1987) equate vision with purpose and identify four characteristics of purpose as being 1) a reference point for goal setting; 2) a yardstick for

measuring a team's progress; 3) focusing shared responsibility; and 4) uniting employees and motivating for excellence and high performance. They differentiate goals from purpose describing goals as a means toward achieving purpose.

Having established the importance of vision, the question becomes not "what is necessary?", but more "how do we best communicate the vision and get the participants to 'buy-in'?"

In their review of the vision oriented literature, Stevens and Marsh (1987) summarize effective visionaries as those who 1) are aware of the research and effective practices surrounding their vision; 2) clearly state and focus their visions on instructional improvement; 3) break the vision down into manageable steps; 4) are cognizant of the vision-organization fit from their own perspective, "not necessarily the teacher perspective"; 5) ensure a demanding vision without overloading the institution.

Taylor (1978) in writing about new schools recommends inservice sessions to be functional in building team approaches and developing positive ties with the community. She recommends such sessions as a method of

ensuring the linkage between planning and implementation of what the planner has envisioned. Taylor is supported by Stevens and Marsh (1987). They report that leaders with the most serious drive toward achieving vision find training an important component. Leaders who stress training realize they cannot achieve the vision alone. An inservice program is also addressed by Klausmeier (1985). He ties effective school reform at the elementary level to the components of academic thrust, administrative arrangements and effective home-school- community relations as essential to enhancing the educational experience.

Gray and Deal (1982) use "storytelling" as a way of establishing a "functional we" of the school through shared perspectives. They propose this method for building commonality among the teachers, parents, and students in a diverse community.

Carew, Parisi-Carew, and Blanchard (1987) tie role understanding and goal clarity closely together. It is commonly held that the more involved the participants are in the development and selection of the goals, the more ownership they perceive for themselves. "The leadership challenge therefore is to... convince various groups and

individuals to buy-in to a set of common goals and then inspire them to work together as a team to achieve these goals (Manske, 1987, p. 12)".

Mutual participation in goal setting is supported elsewhere in the literature as a functional way to encourage shared ownership. Buchholz and Roth (1987) identify team purpose writing and goal setting as an important aspect of high performance team building.

Parent involvement is encouraged through volunteer programs (Holleman, 1975) and parent education and workshops (Wright, 1988). These functions allow for growth in understanding of the functions and problems of the organizations and assist in the goal formulation process.

Description of Selected Solution

The selected solution was an eclectic collection of the information presented. It was felt that this was the most functional way to communicate the vision for the new school to such a diverse audience.

The writer communicated his vision to the faculty which helped commit that vision to written format (Appendix H). He sold his vision through inservice, "storytelling" and campaigning. Staff, parents, and students were encouraged

to become a part of the vision by joining in the process from their own perspective (storytelling), goal setting, purpose writing, planning and participating in extra-curricular activities and modeling.

Report of Action Taken

The first priority for this practicum was to establish a forum for future parents, community members and the faculty to join forces in helping give direction to the new school. This was done by soliciting parent membership in the Citizens' Advisory Committee and developing the Faculty Advisory Committee, four months prior to completion of construction. Early in the summer, these groups met with the principal to assist in developing a vision statement and an initial set of goals.

The vision for the new school was established in combination with what the research offered about developmentally responsive programs, the writer's vision, the needs identified by the parents, and the feelings of the faculty. The writer's contribution was the observation that adult relationships with the children were the key to improving the educational experience, and at the same time were perceived as crucial to healthy emotional and social

growth. With this in mind the vision statement was expressed as "achieving the highest standards through an expanded family circle". This statement reflected the importance of educators, staff, and parents joining in a combined effort to maximize child development.

It was decided that the vision statement should appear on the stationery and on all school related literature delivered to the public. From the statement a motto was coined--"Part of the Family". It was placed on T-shirts and banners. The word "family" was used in public addresses and with the children almost daily. The advisory committees both began using the word during their meetings as did the Parent Teacher Organization.

Next, because the literature and experience indicated the most functional way to encourage program ownership is to have participants help determine the direction, goal setting was accomplished through the combined Faculty Advisory Committee and the Citizens' Advisory Committee. Four initial goals were written: 1) To establish the extended family; 2) To prepare the child for lifetime learning; 3) To provide educational opportunities for teachers and parents; and 4) To develop a practice of

shared decision making.

The Citizens' Advisory Committee also decided to have the colors and mascot in place when the children arrived the first day. It was felt that this would provide a certain amount of identity and spirit building from the beginning. It would also allow T-shirts to be designed and available from the first day. The committee selected the colors. During his visits to the feeder schools, the writer met with the students who would comprise the fifth grade to discuss the mascot. The children joined in overwhelming agreement in the selection.

Faculty and staff inservice was an important aspect of the unification process. A Classroom Operations Manual was developed prior to the school's opening. It included a faculty handbook, family handbook, vision statement, and readings from the research which supported the vision and methods of fulfilling it. Discussion topics included childview, child development, warmth, and affective orientation. Because of the ongoing nature of vision, the inservice process was heavily weighted in the beginning of the year. It comprised two six hour days and continued in 15 to 30 minute segments throughout the remainder of the

year. Journal articles were distributed and discussed (Appendix I). The shorter segments were introduced during faculty meetings and Parent-Teacher Organization meetings, on a regular basis.

The principal spent much of his time modelling the types of relationships that he wanted the faculty and children to develop. Positive orientation was most important. He encouraged creativity and risk taking on the part of the teaching staff so these qualities might be encouraged from the students. Gentle and affectionate treatment of the children was important to the program. These things, too, were modelled. It was hoped that the children would be encouraged to treat each other with gentleness and affection as a result.

Objectives surrounding the academic goal included developing a "blended" curriculum, increased writing experiences, and unifying the disciplinary structure. Teachers were instructed in established methods during the initial inservice. On-going educational opportunities were offered in the writing process, whole language instruction, and computer instruction. Teachers were encouraged to attend workshops which addressed these new directions.

Outside authorities in the areas of writing process and "blended" curriculum were invited to come to the school to offer on-site workshops.

During the first month, teachers developed purpose statements for their individual grade levels through interface meetings with the teachers of the grade level that followed. This allowed input as to the expectations for each grade level of the school program and allowed the teachers to set priorities. Minutes were taken at each of these meetings and became a part of the Classroom Operations Manual.

Teachers were provided the opportunity to write mini-grants. These were used to inspire individuals and groups of teachers to bring the parents into the school, to become a part of the storytelling and vision sharing process. Many of the mini-grants involved parent inclusion around the newly developed blended curriculum. These included invitations to "author's teas", lap-reading activities, parent-child gardening, and geography experiences.

As a part of staff unification, a regularly scheduled bowling league was formed. Meeting every other Friday

after school, approximately half of the faculty and staff were represented on this league.

Parent volunteers were encouraged to develop a school newsletter. The result was a monthly publication of the school events and information about the program. It included a column referred to as the Principal's Corner, which provided the writer with an avenue to promote the school's vision, the goals and objectives, and report on new directions in the curriculum.

Parents were invited to assist in school improvement projects and to suggest new directions in the program. They were heavily represented on two committees which were responsible for major curricular alterations. The Computer Education Committee explored new trends and software for the school's computer education program. The Primary Experience Committee was charged with developing an alternative approach to the kindergarten through second grade. This committee recommended a program for cross-age grouping which will be introduced next year.

Parent educational opportunities in child development and discipline were offered in the evenings. Parents, particularly of the younger children, were asked to attend

"pep-rallies" to build excitement and provide an avenue for home participation in the educational process. At these rallies, older children were cheer leaders and teachers provided hints for working with the children at home. The uniqueness of these rallies drew grant money and media attention.

Other family participation opportunities were provided. These included an ice cream social for honor roll students and their parents at the end of each grading period, open lunch invitations for parents, and cook-outs and picnic lunches for parents and students on early release days and dinners prior to most Parent-Teacher Organization meetings.

Children were drawn into the project by participating in rule setting in their classrooms. They identified with the uniqueness of their school through a campaign centered around the school motto and mascot.

Children, too, became storytellers, through participation in activities centered around the vision. Perhaps the best example of this are the "buddy" programs. Fourth and fifth grade children "adopted" children in the lower grades. The relationships these students shared included reading to the younger boys and girls; providing

affective support--hugging, holding, and other warmth generating activities; assisting with art activities; accompanying the younger children on field trips as chaperones; providing parties and picnics for their younger "brothers and sisters"; and caring for the younger students on the buses.

To inspire a strong emotional tie to the school and its mission, the music teacher wrote a school song which centered around the vision of the school. As a part of the music program each child learned the song. It was also introduced to the parents and the community at the dedication ceremony and is now an official anthem performed at all school-wide functions. The school song has become a major method of school to community storytelling. It has been sung, by the children's choir, in local parades and at mall performances.

Fridays have become school spirit days. Children are encouraged to wear the school colors and display the mascot.

The media was also instrumental in communicating the vision (Appendix J). A major metropolitan newspaper featured the school and its philosophy in its

back-to-school edition. Since the school's opening there have been two additional articles about the school, its vision and spirit building.

This helped provide information to the community at large about the program.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

The results of the unification program were measured using climate surveys, which were administered to teachers, parents, and students. A summary of the disciplinary activity during the first six months of the school year were also tabulated. In order to more logically analyze the results of this practicum, each constituent group will be discussed separately.

Teacher data met criteria for both approval rating and goal knowledge. With an overall average of 3.67, the total surpasses the 3.2 mark which represents 80 percent approval. Table 7 provides a breakdown by item of the responses on the Climate Scale for Teachers.

When broken down by sub scales an analysis of childview (Rohner, 1986), progressiveness, administrative responsiveness (Brandt, 1987), teacher dedication (Kouzes and Posner, 1988), and the goal directedness (Kouzes and Posner, 1988) of the program can be appraised. Each area is well above the 3.2, or 80 percent, approval mark. Table 8 summarizes teacher

Table 7
Climate Scale for Teachers Item Averages
 (n= 33)

1. Teachers in this school are proud to be teachers.....	3.88
2. Teachers trust students to use good judgement.....	3.30
3. This school makes students enthusiastic about learning.....	3.88
4. Attendance is good.....	3.61
5. I like working at this school.....	3.94
6. Parents, teachers, and students would rise to the defense of this school's program if challenged.....	3.64
7. Administration and teachers collaborate toward making the school run effectively.....	3.58
8. There is a "we" spirit at this school.....	3.85
9. When a problem comes up, this school has procedures for working on it.....	3.60
10. Teachers are encouraged to innovate in their classroom rather than conform.....	3.74
11. Teachers experiment with innovative programs.....	3.82
12. Most students and staff members obey school rules.....	3.72
13. Principal is aware of and lets staff and students know when they have done something particularly well..	3.72
14. Problems at this school are recognized and worked on openly and are not allowed to slide.....	3.63
15. People in this school solve problems; they don't just talk about them.....	3.58
16. The goals of the school are used to provide direction.....	3.91
17. Teachers feel free to communicate with the principal..	3.58
18. People with ideas or values different from commonly accepted ones get a chance to be heard.....	3.53
19. In this school the principal tries to deal with conflict constructively.....	3.81
20. I have influence on the decisions within the school that directly affect me.....	3.43
21. Teachers have budget input.....	3.62
22. Adequate opportunity is given for teachers to expand their skills.....	3.53
23. In this school we keep "looking ahead"; we don't spend our time putting out fires.....	3.72
24. Our principal communicates his "vision" and challenges us to work toward fulfilling it.....	3.91
25. Our school is ahead of its time.....	3.78

Average of all scores = 3.69

perception of the five areas.

Table 8

Scale for Teachers Subscale Averages

Subscale	Items Included	Average
Progressiveness	10, 11, 18, 23, 25	3.72
Administrative		
Responsiveness	7, 9, 13, 14, 17, 19, 24	3.68
Childview	2, 3, 4	3.60
Program Dedication	1, 5, 6, 12	3.80
Goal Directedness	8, 15, 16, 20, 21, 22	3.65

Table 9 is a breakdown of the goal knowledge of the faculty. In order to meet criteria 8 of 10 of the respondents had to state three of the schools four annual goals. The

Table 9

Teacher Goal Recognition

(n= 33)

Identified Goals	Number of Teachers
0	0
1	1
2	5
3	4
4	23

faculty were at criteria, with 27 of 33 recognizing at least three of the four goals. Most were able to identify all four of the school's annual goals.

Three different forms of child data were collected--the Climate Scale for Kids, knowledge of the school colors and mascot, and disciplinary data. Discipline data contributed to the effectiveness measurement of the extended family objective. Table 10 reflects the results of office referrals during the first six months of the program. It separates inappropriate behavior for each grade level into three categories--aggression, inappropriate classroom behavior, and other behaviors.

Table 10

Discipline Referral Data

Grade	Referrals	n=	Aggression	Classroom	Other
K	31	15	2	29	0
1	11	7	10	0	1
2	24	15	14	7	3
3	22	16	7	12	3
4	12	9	7	5	0
5	7	7	2	3	2
Totals	107	69	42	56	9

Objective criterion was set at less than 15 percent of student population referred to the office for disciplinary problems. With the school population fluctuating between 680 and 700, criterion was met with 69 students being referred. This represented approximately 10 percent of the student population. Of particular note is the low number of referrals for aggressive behavior. Fighting and allied behaviors occurred at a rate of approximately seven per month.

Table 11 illustrates the results of the Climate Scale for Kids. The item analysis shows a great deal of variation. The overall rating for this measure is below the specified approval rating of 80 percent or 3.2.

Random selection was made by drawing four numbers from one to twenty. The numbers were matched to the names of the children from the class rosters. Four children were selected from each classroom. Children who were absent were not replaced.

Children in kindergarten through the second grade were administered the Climate Scale for Kids by parent volunteers. They were permitted to rephrase the statement, if they felt the child did not understand. For each group the parent administrator suggested that the children couldn't handle the

Table 11

Climate Scale for Kids

Item Averages (n= 109)

1. Teachers treat students as persons.....	3.18
2. Students would rather attend this school than transfer to another.....	3.27
3. There is someone at this school that I can always count on.....	3.14
4. The principal really cares about the students.....	3.33
5. I feel needed and wanted in this school.....	3.20
6. Most people at this school are kind.....	3.25
7. We helped make the rules in our classroom.....	2.92
8. The teachers tell me when I have done something good..	3.03
9. My teacher wants to help me when I don't understand...	2.95
10. Most of the kids obey the rules.....	2.97
11. When rules are broken, punishment is fair.....	3.04
12. I feel safe at this school.....	3.15
13. Teachers tell my mom or dad when I have done something good.....	2.84
14. I like coming to school.....	3.17
15. I learned a lot this year.....	3.26

Average of all scores = 3.11

four point scale. In some cases, the statements were not comprehended by the children even when rephrased. Thus, for this population, the reliability of the measure is questionable. Perhaps this accounts for the lower average scores for the primary age children.

Third, fourth, and fifth grade students were administered the scale in a large group. Their scores were significantly higher (surpassing criterion) than the younger group. There was also the suggestion that some items were ambiguous to the children and had to be rephrased.

Though the combined children's scores did not meet criterion, they were strong. Criterion was set at 80 percent. The overall computed score for the Kid's Scale was 78 percent.

Three subscales were of interest in reviewing the results of the Climate Scale for Kids. In adult-child dyads it is important to view the relationship from the perspective of the child. Thus one area of interest was how the child perceived the relationship of the faculty to the children. This is represented by the Faculty Responsiveness subscale. The Faculty View subscale was a measure of how the child perceived the faculty and staff. Program responsiveness is a child's evaluation of how well the program meets children's needs.

Table 12 summarizes the strength of these perceptions.

Table 12

Scale for Kid's Subscale Averages

(n= 109)

Subscale	Item Numbers	Score
Faculty View	1, 3, 4, 6	3.23
Faculty Responsiveness	5, 8, 9, 12, 13	3.03
Program Responsiveness	2, 7, 10, 11, 14, 15	3.11

The scores for two of the three areas are rated below the 3.2 criterion. Interestingly, the children appear to feel more positively about their relationships to the teachers, than they perceive the teachers' relationships to them.

Program knowledge, on the part of the children, was measured by the number of children who could identify the school's mascot and colors. The mascot was identified by 85 percent of the children in the sample. The school colors were identified by 49 percent. Criterion, or 80 percent, was reached only for the mascot item. Again the third, fourth and fifth grade students met criterion on both the mascot and the school colors. The younger children, though able to identify the mascot, were not capable of identifying the colors.

Though the objectives did not address specific academic

achievement, it is interesting to note that over 40 percent of the student body have been represented on the last two A and B honor rolls. This unexpected result does tie in to the vision process (Buchholz and Roth, 1987) and as such was worthy of reporting.

Attendance data from the first six months shows an average daily attendance rate of 94.8 percent. This was achieved even though a large outbreak of chicken pox occurred during the period.

Two objectives were designed for the parent's of the children served by the school. One was to obtain an eighty percent approval rating on the climate scale. The other was to measure parental understanding of the school's goals. Measurement was done through the use of the Climate Scale for Parents (Appendix G). The Scale was administered to any parent reporting to the office, for any reason, during a two week measurement period. This provided a random sampling while, at the same time, ensuring that the respondent had at least visited the school, even for a minimal amount of time.

Table 13 represents a breakdown of the results by item of the Climate Scale for Parents. In order to meet the objective a collective approval rating of 3.2 or greater had

Table 13
Climate Scale for Parents Item Averages
 (n= 63)

1. In this school even low achieving students are respected.....	3.77
2. Teachers treat students as persons.....	3.89
3. Parents are considered as team members.....	3.86
4. Students feel teachers are "on their side".....	3.81
5. This school makes children enthusiastic about learning.....	3.83
6. Teachers feel pride in this school and its students...	3.90
7. Parents, teachers, and students would rise to the defense of this school's program if challenged.....	3.85
8. When all is said and done, I feel that I count at this school.....	3.78
9. The teachers are "alive"; they are interested in life around them; they are doing interesting things outside the school.....	3.85
10. The school supports parent growth. Regular opportunities are provided for parents to be involved in learning activities and in examining new ideas.....	3.76
11. There is a "we" spirit at this school.....	3.95
12. When a student comes along who has special problems, this school works out a plan that helps that student..	3.67
13. Careful effort is made, when new programs are introduced, to adapt them to the particular needs of tunity and this school.....	3.71
14. The principal really cares about the students.....	3.98
15. Most people at this school are kind.....	3.97
16. Teachers know students as individuals.....	3.81
17. The school operates under a set of rules that were worked out with students, teachers, parents, and administration all participating.....	3.76
18. Rules are few and simple.....	3.70
19. Discipline when given is fair and related to violations of agreed on rules.....	3.71
20. The grading system rewards students for their effort as related to their ability.....	3.89
21. Community involvement is sought in developing the school's goals.....	3.82
22. The principal talks with us frankly.....	3.85
23. Teachers are available to help with student problems..	3.79
24. Parents and community leaders have opportunities to work with school officials at least once a year on "things we'd like to see happening in our school".....	3.81
25. Our school is ahead of its time.....	3.79
Average of all scores = 3.82	

to be obtained. The overall rating of 3.82 exceeds that minimum. The lowest score was obtained on item twelve. It relates to services the school provides for students needing extra attention. The high score was measured on item number fourteen. It was concerned with the perception of the principal's childview and his relationship to the children.

The Scale was designed to allow an analysis of several program components. These include the parents perception of the progressiveness of the program, the academic thrust (Klausmeier, 1985), the childview of the staff (Rohner, 1986), discipline, and parent participation (Klausmeier, 1985). Tabulation of the results by program components is illustrated in Table 14. When viewed as subscales the academic thrust achieved the highest approval rating from the parents and

Table 14

Scale for Parents Subscale Averages

Subscale	Items Included	Average
Progressiveness	7, 11, 13, 25	3.83
Discipline	17, 18, 19	3.72
Childview	1, 2, 4, 12, 14, 15, 16	3.84
Academic Thrust	5, 6, 9, 20, 23	3.85
Parent Involvement	3, 8, 10, 21, 22, 24	3.81

discipline the lowest. All, however, demonstrated a strong overall parental support for the program.

The Climate Scale for Parents also measured parental knowledge of the school's annual goals. This objective was not met. Only 23 of the 63 parents attempted to identify any of the annual goals. Table 15 summarizes the results of the goal identification by those twenty three.

It is interesting to note that 18 of the 23 identified the goal which relates directly to the vision statement. In addition several of the respondents commented on the strong dedication to the vision, including many that did not try to identify the goals. This may be the result of successfully "selling" the school's vision.

Table 15

Parental Goal Recognition

(n=23)

Identified Goals	Number of Parents
0	4
1	11
2	6
3	2
4	0

Conclusions

The thrust of this practicum was to develop a new school program around a unique vision statement. Generally this provided a unification device that incorporated all of the various publics involved with the school. The aim was not just to unify, though. It was to add direction to the program, to develop a knowledge of purpose, and to increase active participation. The results indicate that these things were, for the most part, accomplished. They are also consistent with the research surrounding vision.

Collective planning, education and "storytelling" preceeded implementation. These were necessary components in identifying the "why's" and "how's" of the new program. In this particular practicum, these things were absolutely essential in instilling a collective "we". Each of the participants brought with them an individual history steeped in expectation and shaded with various understandings of purpose. Initial activities of developing goals, making the vision more concrete, formulating an identity for the children, and planning public gatherings to promote the vision were perceived as responsible for the initial success of this program.

What is illustrated by the data is supported by the behavior of the participants. Children are showing academic successes and behavioral responsibility. Teachers are innovating and creating around a unique set of goals and a novel curriculum. Parents are coming to lunch with their children at a rate of two per day, parent volunteers are numerous, and there is a high rate of parent solicitation for help in child-rearing. The community as a whole has been very responsive financially with major contributions of funds from businesses, as well as funding and volunteer help from civic organizations.

A strong vision appears, in this practicum, to have increased the academic thrust, improved the "we" orientation, and ensured a relatively high level of job satisfaction. The academic thrust is evident in the number of honors students and the score on that subscale of the Climate Scale for Parents. The "we" orientation is evident in the scores on all three scales relating to the dedication to, and the cohesiveness of, the participants. Teachers also indicated high levels of job satisfaction both through their obvious commitment through working long hours after school and on weekends, and their scores on the Climate Scale for Teachers.

Though careful planning around the vision appears to have paid off, the content of the vision statement is perceived as having a great deal of influence. The question of what the purpose of a school of the 90's should be was an important consideration. Rather than key in on academic achievement and test scores as a measure of success, this school considered what type of person it would like to develop. Besides academic preparation, it was decided that a child needed to learn compassion and respect for others, how to communicate warmth and emotion, and responsibility for his/her behavior. Above all this school desired to develop character to such a degree that the children would maximize their potential in any endeavor. Parent, teacher, and child attitudes and behaviors are indicative of the success of this practicum. Fruitful pursuit of the school's vision is evident in the measurement of these attitudes and behaviors.

Recommendations

In beginning a new school program, unification of the various publics enhances program success. This process must begin several months prior to opening the school. Organizing advisory groups of parents and teachers has proven to be crucial in planning.

A clear organizational vision offers a very strong support to new organizations. The development process begins by communicating the leader's vision and ends with the participants refining and solidifying organizational direction and developing goals around it. From the standpoint of this practicum, a vision needs to be broad enough to include many program facets, but narrow enough to be achievable.

Implementation of the vision requires communication through educating the participants and modelling vision oriented behaviors. Teachers are effectively educated in "why's" and "how's" through pre-planning inservice. Parents, children, and community are informed through effective advertising. Publishing the vision statement on all printed matter and including the school motto on T-shirts, buttons and badges was very effective in this case.

Activities that bring people into the school should be encouraged. These serve the function of communicating vision and strengthening goal accomplishment.

Modelling behaviors related to the vision was seen as crucial in this practicum. The principal modelled compatible behaviors for the teachers. In this case, affective behaviors were modeled.

Teachers modelled behaviors for the children and the vision was thus effectively communicated to the student. The children then communicated to the parents through storytelling and behavioral change.

It is also recommended that attention be given to the primary students. These children are pre-operational and, as such, find quantification of attitude difficult. Redesigning of the Climate Scale for Kids would be recommended if it is to be used with children kindergarten through second grade.

In summary, recommendations resulting from this practicum are that principals faced with opening new schools should begin long before the projected opening date; they should identify and assemble advisory committees of future parents and employees; develop a vision and communicate it through inservice and modelling; and keep the vision in front of the participants at all times.

Dissemination

The results of this report have been discussed with the faculty of the school and the Citizens' Advisory Committee. The responses to the various Climate Scales have been utilized by addressing items in the school's newsletter. For example, because of the lower averages on the item pertaining to the

school being "ahead of its time" on both the Parent Scale and Teacher Scale, a column in the newsletter pointed out ways that our school was excelling.

Growth in our area has contributed to a building schedule that includes three new schools over the next six years. The methods and procedures utilized in this practicum are to be included in a manual the school system is developing for principals who are opening new schools.

The contents of the vision and activities surrounding the unification are expected to be presented in two symposia--one titled "The School As a Family Surrogate" and another dealing with the concept of cross-age grouping. It is further anticipated that a journal article, which capsulates the vision and activities reflected in this practicum, will be written and submitted for publication.

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APPENDIX A
NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Preliminary Needs Assessment
Parent Questionnaire
CAC Meeting

March 7, 1989

Please take a few minutes to fill out this form. Your opinions and thoughts are very important. You are the reason for the school's very existence and your input is valuable. There is no need to put your name on this form, so you can be completely honest. Thanks!

1. Please pick the three items below that are the most important to you, as far as the school program goes.

☐ warm and caring atmosphere.
☐ effective school-wide discipline plan.
☐ ample homework
☐ parent-teacher team approach.
☐ academic achievement above the district average.

2. Please select the three most important items as far as your child(ren) are concerned.

☐ positive self-image
☐ well disciplined
☐ well informed--high level of knowledge
☐ sense of security
☐ good social skills
☐ even tempered
☐ concern for others

3. What qualities do you like in a teacher?

4. How active are you with your child(ren)'s current school?

☐ attend most evening programs.
☐ room mother or father.
☐ school volunteer (VITAL).
☐ active with PTO or CAC.
☐ not active.

For the following just put a check mark in the appropriate column.

	Yes	No	Maybe
5. Could you list three of your current school's annual goals?	—	—	—
6. Do you know the current school's colors?	—	—	—
7. Do you know the current school's mascot	—	—	—
8. Does your child's current school have a school motto?	—	—	—
9. If so, do you know it?	—	—	—
10. If our new school offered parent classes in child development, discipline methods, helping your child with academic work, etc. would you attend?	—	—	—
11. Would you be interested in school uniforms, if everyone could get five complete outfits for less than \$75?	—	—	—
12. I would be comfortable with a family thrust--many family centered activities --at the new school.	—	—	—
13. I feel that most schools are alike.	—	—	—
14. I'm willing to become involved with the new school.	—	—	—
15. I'm excited with the thought of my child(ren) attending the new school.	—	—	—
16. I would be interested in a year-round school program (45 days on/ 15 days off).	—	—	—
17. Do you have any concerns about you child attending the new school? If so what are they?			

APPENDIX B
TEACHER DIVERSITY SCALE

Diversity Questionnaire

Teacher Version

The purpose of this questionnaire is to measure the differences between programs in the schools where our children currently attend. It is hoped that this will give guidance to providing the kinds of experiences that parents and teachers will need to begin understanding of the processes we will encourage at the new school.

You will notice that there is no need to put a name on this questionnaire nor are you asked to identify the name of the school you are describing, so be as candid as you can with your answers.

Instructions: Circle Yes or No for each item.

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. The school has a developmental kindergarten program. | Yes | No |
| 2. I'm aware of the vision of the principal. I know what he wants for the children who attend school here. | Yes | No |
| 3. Teacher's often choose to eat lunch with their classes. | Yes | No |
| 4. As a school, we spend a lot of time addressing the emotional needs of the children who attend here. | Yes | No |
| 5. Academics are the first and foremost goal of this program. | Yes | No |
| 6. Test results are stressed a great deal by our administrator. | Yes | No |
| 7. We have a family day each year. | Yes | No |
| 8. Parents are encouraged to come to the school anytime they wish. | Yes | No |
| 9. Recess is a required part of our school program. | Yes | No |
| 10. We have an after school care program at our school. | Yes | No |
| 11. The playground and playing fields are open after school and on weekends. | Yes | No |
| 12. Corporal punishment is used in our discipline program. | Yes | No |
| 13. The administrator(s) spend(s) most of the day trying to prevent behavior problems. | Yes | No |
| 14. Teachers are encouraged to vary the curriculum as they feel necessary. | Yes | No |

15. There is a parent library at this school.	Yes	No
16. Our teacher library subscribes to several professional journals.	Yes	No
17. Our school offers evening parenting programs to the community.	Yes	No
18. Besides the PTO or APT, our school plans many events to get the parents to the school and involved in the program.	Yes	No
19. We have a school-wide discipline program.	Yes	No
20. Our Citizens' Advisory Committee is very active.	Yes	No
21. We have a faculty advisory committee at the school.	Yes	No
22. The curriculum is demanding too much too early from the children.	Yes	No
23. The administrator(s) spend time counselling children and parents on a regular basis.	Yes	No
24. There is an overall concern to make the school a warm place for kids to be.	Yes	No
25. Many of our children have to be medicated to have a productive day.	Yes	No
26. Teachers make many positive phone calls home each grading period.	Yes	No
27. Most of the teachers' calls home are to solicit the help of the parent in dealing with a problem.	Yes	No
28. Our school has too many fund raising drives during the year.	Yes	No
29. The principal is in each of our classrooms for at least three minutes per day.	Yes	No
30. The principal knows each child by name.	Yes	No

APPENDIX C
CHILDREN'S DIVERSITY SCALE

Children's Diversity Questionnaire

1. Most of the time, why do children go to the principal's office?
 - a. he/she did something wrong. _____
 - b. to show him/her something good. _____
 - c. just to talk to him/her. _____

2. Does your teacher or the principal ever eat lunch with the children?
 - a. yes, both do. _____
 - b. the teacher does. _____
 - c. the principal does. _____
 - d. no. _____

3. Do moms and dads ever come to school to eat lunch, to help with the class, or just visit?
 - a. Yes _____
 - b. No _____

4. When your teacher calls or writes a note home is it usually good news or bad news?
 - a. Good news _____
 - b. Bad news _____

5. What's most important, getting good grades or trying hard?
 - a. Good grades _____
 - b. Trying hard _____

6. What happens at school when you do something bad? (If suspension is offered ask, "What if it wasn't that bad.")
 - a. Paddled, spanked, etc. _____
 - b. Detention _____
 - c. Phone home _____
 - d. Other _____

7. How does your teacher let you know that he/she likes what you've done?
 - a. Hugs and pats (physical contact) _____
 - b. Praise _____
 - c. Notes home _____

8. How does your teacher let you know that he/she doesn't like what you've done?
 - a. Name on the board and check marks _____
 - b. Yells _____
 - c. Sends to office _____
 - d. Parent contact _____
 - e. Loss of privileges _____

9. Do your mom and dad come to school with you at night sometimes?
 - a. Yes _____
 - b. No _____

10. Do you feel like the teachers and principal love or like you a lot?
 - a. Yes _____
 - b. No _____
 - c. Not sure _____

11. Do they ever tell you how special you are?
 - a. Yes _____
 - b. No _____

12. Do you ever get hugged by the teacher?
 - a. Yes _____
 - b. No _____

13. Do you ever get hugged by the principal?
 - a. Yes _____
 - b. No _____

Grade Level Purpose Statement

Date: _____

Grade Level: _____

Teachers Present:

Grade Level Goals:

Grade Level Objectives:

Curriculum Themes:

Climate Scale for Teachers

Please review each of the following statements. Indicate your level of agreement by placing a number corresponding to your perception next to the item. Thank you for taking the time to respond. The results are feedback to the principal about "where we are" and "where we need to head".

1= Almost Never 2= Occasionally 3= Frequently 4= Almost Always

1. Teachers in this school are proud to be teachers. _____
2. Teachers trust students to use good judgement. _____
3. This school makes students enthusiastic about learning. _____
4. Attendance is good; students stay away only for urgent and good reasons. _____
5. I like working at this school. _____
6. Parents, teachers, and students would rise to the defense of this school's program if it were challenged. _____
7. Administration and teachers collaborate toward making the school run effectively; there is little administrator-teacher tension. _____
8. There is a "we" spirit in this school. _____
9. When a problem comes up, this school has procedures for working on it; problems are seen as normal challenges, not as "rocking the boat". _____
10. Teachers are encouraged to innovate in their classrooms rather than conform. _____
11. Teachers experiment with innovative programs. _____
12. Most students and staff members obey the school rules. _____
13. The principal is aware of and lets staff and students know when they have done something particularly well. _____
14. Problems at this school are recognized and worked on openly and are not allowed to slide. _____
15. People in this school solve problems; they don't just talk about them. _____
16. The goals of this school are used to provide direction for programs. _____
17. Teachers feel free to communicate with the principal. _____

18. In this school people with ideas or values different from the commonly accepted ones get a chance to be heard. _____
19. In this school the principal tries to deal with conflict constructively, not just "keep the lid on". _____
20. I have influence on the decisions within the school that directly affect me. _____
21. This school provides opportunities for teachers to recommend and make judgements about priorities for resources needed in their program at budget time. _____
22. Adequate opportunity is given for teachers to expand their skills. _____
23. In this school we keep "looking ahead"; we don't spend all our time "putting out fires". _____
24. Our principal communicates his "vision" and challenges us to work toward fulfilling it. _____
25. Our school is ahead of its time. _____

Below please list as many of the school's annual goals that you can. Because you don't have to identify yourself, you shouldn't be embarrassed or hesitant.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Climate Scale for Kids

Below are some statements about the school. For many of the children the answers will have to be solicited reading the items to the child. There four choices for the child to select from. They are listed below. Thank you for taking the time to go over this it helps the principal by providing feedback about the program.

1= Not a lot 2= Sometimes 3= A lot 4= Most of the time

1. Teachers treat students as persons. _____
2. Students would rather attend this school than transfer to another. _____
3. There is someone at this school that I can always count on. _____
4. The principal really cares about the students. _____
5. I feel needed and wanted in this school. _____
6. Most people at this school are kind. _____
7. We helped make the rules in our classroom. _____
8. The teachers tell me when I have done something good. _____
9. My teacher wants to help me when I don't understand. _____
10. Most of the kids obey the rules. _____
11. When the rules are broken, the punishment is fair. _____
12. I feel safe at this school. _____
13. Teachers tell my mom or dad when I have done something good. _____
14. I like coming to school. _____
15. I learned a lot this year. _____

What are the school colors?

What is the school mascot?

Climate Scale for Parents

Please review each of the following statements. Indicate your level of agreement by placing a number corresponding to your perception next to the item. Thank you for taking the time to respond. The results are feedback to the principal about "where we are" and "where we need to head".

1= Almost Never 2= Occasionally 3= Frequently 4= Almost Always

1. In this school even low achieving students are respected. _____
2. Teachers treat students as persons. _____
3. Parents are considered as team members at this school. _____
4. Students feel teachers are "on their side". _____
5. This school makes children enthusiastic about learning. _____
6. Teachers feel pride in this school and its students. _____
7. Parents, teachers, and students would rise to the defense of this school's program if it were challenged. _____
8. When all is said and done, I feel that I count at this school. _____
9. The teachers are "alive"; they are interested in life around them; they are doing interesting things outside of school. _____
10. The school supports parent growth. Regular opportunities are provided for parents to be involved in learning activities and in examining new ideas. _____
11. There is a "we" spirit at this school. _____
12. When a student comes along who has special problems, this school works out a plan that helps that student. _____
13. Careful effort is made, when new programs are introduced, to adapt them to the particular needs of this community and this school. _____
14. The principal really cares about the students. _____
15. Most people at this school are kind. _____
16. Teachers know students as individuals. _____
17. The school operates under a set of rules that were worked out with students, teachers, parents, and administration all participating. _____

18. Rules are few and simple. _____
19. Discipline when given is fair and related to violations of agreed on rules. _____
20. The grading system rewards students for their effort as related to their ability. _____
21. Community involvement is sought in developing the school's goals. _____
22. The principal talks with us frankly and openly. _____
23. Teachers are available to help with student problems. _____
24. Parents and community leaders have opportunities to work with school officials at least once a year on "things we'd like to see happening in our school". _____
25. Our school is ahead of its time. _____

Below please list as many of the school's annual goals that you can. Because you don't have to identify yourself, you shouldn't be embarrassed or hesitant.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

The Vision Statement

**"Achieving the highest standards through
an expanded family circle."**

During the school year, each of our children spends approximately 35 percent of his/her total waking hours in the classroom. This places on the faculty a large burden of responsibility for shaping them as functional members of our society. It also means that we must build the supportive warmth of a family at school.

The research of Abraham Maslow shows us that children have specific needs that must be satisfied if they are to maximize their potential as human beings. The most basic of these needs is for food, water, air, and other bodily survival necessities. The next level of need is for security. Children must feel secure and safe. To achieve this, children must have realistic limits set for their behavior in a trusted environment. The drive then develops for belongingness and love. This need for affection can only be satisfied by other people. Love is communicated not only through our words, but more importantly our actions. After the child knows that others find him/her lovable, he/she begins to work on self-esteem. It is in fulfilling this need that the child establishes the understanding of him/herself as a capable person. The final level is that of self-actualization. People reaching the self-actualization stage demonstrate self-assurance, self-understanding, and provide an important contribution to the society of which they are a part.

Our school mission is to work with the parents of our children in providing for the most basic needs. We do this through assisting in securing and in some cases providing for the basic survival needs of the child. Our assertive discipline program provides for the child's security and safety in the school environment. Most importantly though we address the levels of belongingness and love and self-esteem.

The promise of the program is that we will work to ensure that each child feels loved and accepted. This is a primary commitment. Until we satisfy the child's need for love and acceptance he/she will not achieve maximum academic growth. Realizing this we will work toward making our school second only to home as a nurturing environment for our children.

The second promise of our program is that the child will feel capable in tackling the daily challenges at school. The level of challenge for each of our children will be such that success can be readily realized. At all times, we will hold the child's effort in the highest light. Effort is recognized as every bit as important as the final product.

**Our guarantee is that every child will complete the program at
knowing and believing that he or she is lovable and capable.**

APPENDIX I
BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR TEACHER INSERVICE

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APPENDIX J
NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

In the name of education

Fourth-graders vote to call school

Elementary

By Carolyn H. Cox

OF THE SENTINEL STAFF

Lake County's newest school soon may have a name:

Elementary.

Principal Jack Currie, who has surveyed students, parents and community leaders, plans to present the name to the school board for consideration on April 25. The school is scheduled to open in August.

Currie has been working for more than a month to develop a community consensus on a name for the new school, which is being

built at Huff east of . It currently is referred to as "Elementary A."

On March 7, the school's citizens advisory committee held its first meeting and voted on four potential names: one vote; , two votes;

, 11 votes; and Tree Top, no votes.

On April 6, Currie met with the Chamber of Commerce, which also voted on names.

The group cast 27 votes for Elementary, 25 for

; eight for ; and no votes for Elementary.

Because of the split between and the chamber group unanimously decided to allow fourth-graders who will attend the school to cast the deciding vote.

Children at and Elementary were polled, and their collective vote was 62 for Seminole Springs to 23 for East Lake.

The school's citizens advisory committee also has chosen a mascot and colors for the school, said Currie.

The mascot is the black bear cub, and the colors are Kelly green and royal blue.

Education

May 26, 1989

Principal has ambitious plans for newest elementary school

By Carolyn H. Cox

OF THE SENTINEL STAFF

— Tucked away off rural State Road 44, where a diamond-shaped yellow sign warns motorists to be alert for bears crossing the highway, Elementary School is rapidly taking shape.

The thump of hammers and whine of saws fill the sultry air as construction crews scurry to complete the sienna brick building before students arrive Aug. 14.

Principal Jack Currie, who is eager to move in, points with pride to some of the new school's features. Walking through the large cream and mauve room that will be the media center, he said, "We want very much to have one of the more advanced libraries around."

In addition to books for students, he plans a professional library for teachers and parents that will include a computer capable of providing information on child development, parenting skills and teaching techniques from the nation's most respected universities.

"We're so far from the universities, I feel this is really needed," said Currie.

The gregarious principal, affectionately dubbed "Mr. Hugs" because he gives a lot of them, points to a recessed area of the media center. The semicircular pit, which abuts a bookshelf, is designed for students to cuddle up with books.

"The first time I saw it, it was filled with water and I thought, 'Oh, boy! We're getting a Jacuzzi!'" Currie joked.

The new school also has a covered pavilion that separates the office, cafeteria and library from classrooms. The 4,750-square-foot area will be used for picnics, family cookouts and physical education classes in foul weather.

"This is one of my favorite areas in the whole school," said Currie, who plans to have several cookouts for parents each year as he did at the school he is leaving, Elementary.

He also plans to import another practice he began at — letting students plan lunch menus. He envisions allowing each class to take turns plan-

ning a week's worth of menus throughout the year.

Student participation in the school lunch program went up 20 percent when he began the practice at Minneola, he said.

"It's a learning process for them," Currie said. "They learn about nutrition and they learn about balanced meals. Besides, I'm tired of seeing kids throw food away."

The cafeteria will look a little different than most in Lake County because it will have round tables that will seat five to six children instead of long rows of rectangular tables. Children will be allowed to choose their lunch mates because Currie believes they need time during the day to socialize.

The school also will have an art room, complete with a kiln for pottery. Although Lake County does not, as a rule, have art teachers in elementary schools, Currie hopes to find volunteers to work with students. Teachers will also use the room for messy art projects.

Every classroom will have a bathroom, and so will Currie's office.

Teachers will have plenty of room for their projects as well. For every three classrooms there is an

adjoining office area for teachers. The classrooms, with color schemes in cream and mauve or cream and Wedgwood blue, also have walk-in supply closets and mounted shelves with hooks for coats and jackets.

Currie has hired most of the staff for the school, which will have a faculty of 36. He expects to open with 680 students, most of whom now attend schools in

adjoining office area for teachers. The school district, said he is confident the school will be ready by the time school starts. However, the contractor will not meet the June deadline for finishing construction.

"It's almost impossible to build a \$5 million school in 10½ months," said . He added that bureaucratic holdups in obtaining permits for wells account for part of the delay.

Currie and the school's newly formed Citizens Advisory Committee have chosen the black bear cub as the school's mascot. He has ordered color photographs of bear cubs to decorate the lobby, and the advisory committee plans to sell bear cub T-shirts.

He also hopes to have a little fun with the bear theme — posting several yellow bear-crossing signs like the one on campus.

Eustis school a showpiece

Elementary
uses 'suite' approach to learning

By Jim Runnels

OF THE SENTINEL STAFF

— At the new Elementary School, the teachers are walking around with stars in their eyes.

"It's just like Christmas!" one kindergarten teacher exclaimed. "I can't believe we have all of this room."

The \$4.5-million school, which took a year to build, is located on Huff Road

The classrooms are built in "suites" of four or five rooms, with a central office for teachers placed between the rooms.

Student and teacher restrooms are in the same "suite," along with telephone, intercom and even computer links to the main office.

"With the computer terminals, the teachers can go ahead and put all of their grades directly into the school's main system without ever leaving their office," Principal Jack Currie said.

But that's certainly not all: from the huge pressure grease fryer in the kitchen to the dressing rooms behind the large school stage, is a showpiece for the county.

Scheduled to have 650 to 680 students during its first year, the school probably will be filled to its capacity of 767 shortly.

The school has the best of everything: At the front door, there is a large office complex that even has a clinic with a hospital bed. At the rear of the campus, maintenance men have a full shop to work in.

Er, well, it will have the best of everything. Seems as though the company supplying the tables for the cafeteria won't be able to deliver for awhile. "It was touch and go, but the same company is going to lend us some tables until ours get here," Currie said.

The school also is without its computer equipment for its skills laboratory, but Currie said that contract is supposed to be closed rapidly.

One of the unique features of the school is that rainy weather need not keep the students inside.

Instead, a huge inner courtyard capped with a massive roof will allow teachers to take the students out for physical education even if a storm is raging.

Currie has some designs of his own for the large covered space.

"What a great place for us to have our barbecues,"

Please see NEW, AA-4



JOSEPH GARNETT JR./SENTINEL
a hug.

Seminole Springs principal Jack Currie gives

NEW

From AA-1

Currie said. "It's just perfect for that."

Currie said he hopes to get parents of students involved quickly. Assistant

will take on parental involvement as a special project, Currie said.

"There's really only one thing missing from this school," Currie said Monday as he walked through the quiet corridors.

"That's the kids. It just doesn't seem right without the kids around."

East Lake elementary school whips up spirit

By Bill Trask
Daily Commercial Staff Writer

Students in the third and fifth grades will lead the cheers, and parents will be expected to bring plenty of enthusiasm when the school holds parent pep rallies this week.

The meetings for parents of students are slated for two evenings at 7 p.m. with first-graders and parents invited on Tuesday and kindergartners and their families due on Thursday.

Older students, who have been "buddies" of the smaller students since the school opened in August, have the duty of whipping up enthusiasm each evening, said primary specialist at the school.

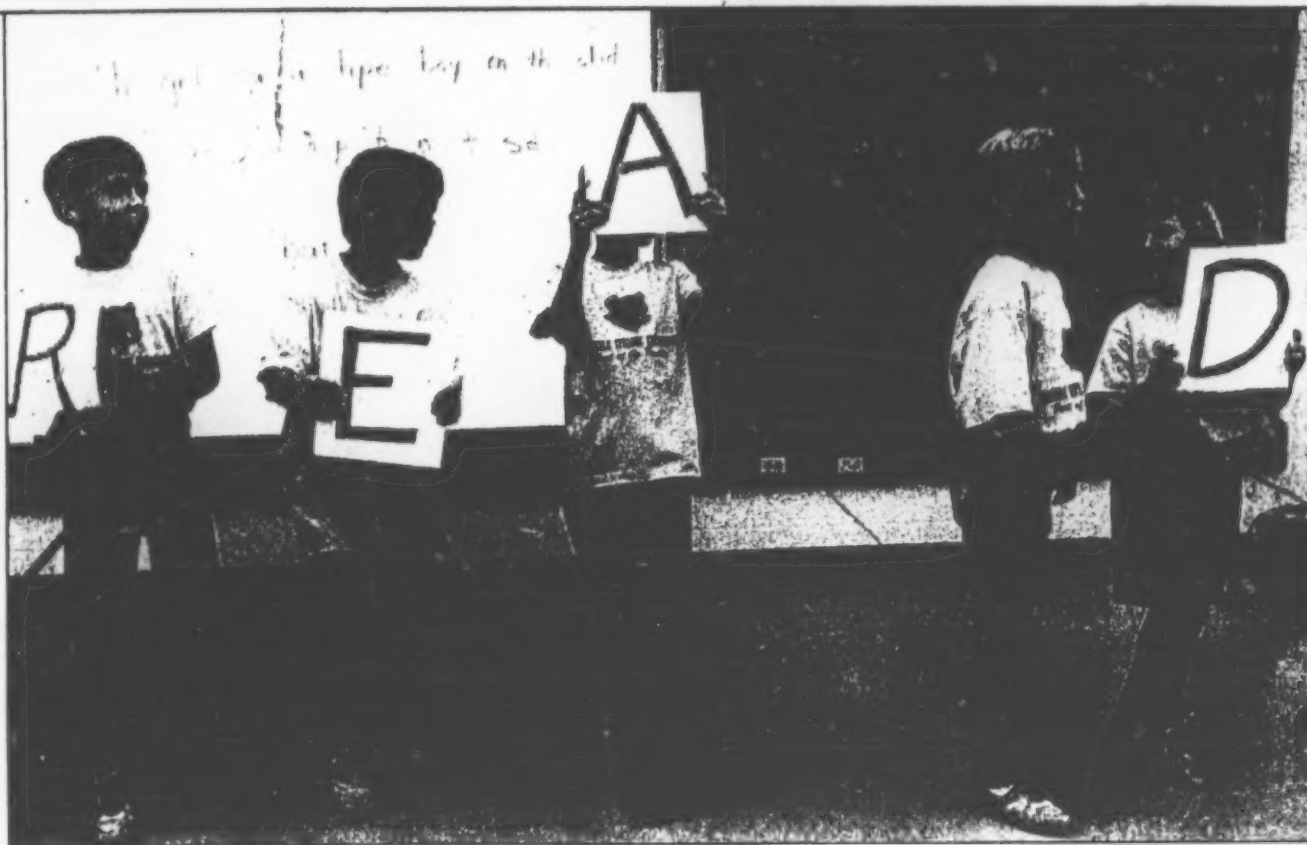
In addition to leading cheers, the third- and fifth-graders will give skits and lead parents in singing the school song, said.

On Tuesday night, the program will feature a slide presentation of first-grade activities, she said.

School is Lake County's newest, and Principal Jack Currie has been involved in a program to build school spirit and a sense of community since students arrived.

Since school opened, fifth-graders have been "buddies" for kindergartners, showing them the ropes and making them feel welcome. Third-graders have taken the first-graders under their wings.

It has been good for school spirit, "but we want the parents to get involved, too," said.



Staff photo by Jim Meserian

PEPPY STUDENTS

Third-grade students at Elementary held a Parent Pep Rally on Tuesday night to tell parents different ways to teach their children learning skills at home. Primary Specialist said parents should encourage their children to read, listen, play games, and find out what interests them.

DAILY COMMERCIAL / WEDNESDAY, NOV. 15, 1989